

Lately published, by the Author of the following Treatise,

A

D I S C O U R S E

CONCERNING THE

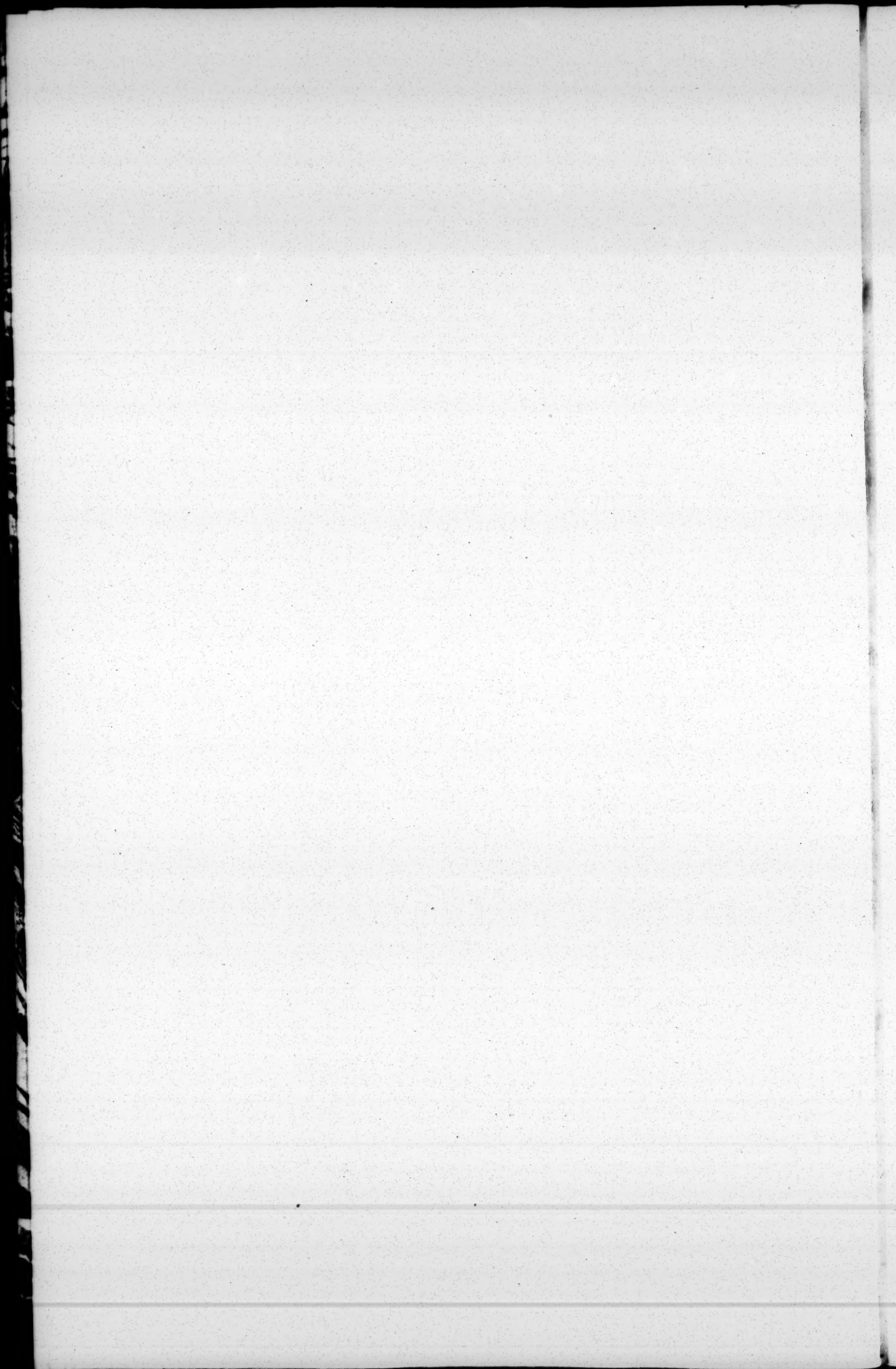
RESURRECTION BODIES;

TENDING TO EXPLAIN,

From the Writings of HEATHENS, JEWS, and
CHRISTIANS,

THE NATURE OF THE BODIES

With which we rise from the Dead.



Yorke. c. 74

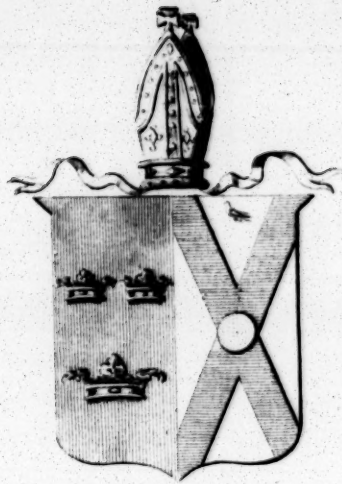
A
PLAIN AND RATIONAL
A C C O U N T
OF
MAN'S SALVATION
BY
JESUS CHRIST.
TO WHICH ARE ADDED,
A CAUTION TO MEN IN GENERAL,
AND
AN EXHORTATION TO BELIEVERS.

By J. GOUGH, A. B.
AUTHOR OF THE
DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION BODIES

Every one of these (Christian) doctrines has a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence, to reform men's lives, and correct their manners. This is the great end, and ultimate design, of all true religion; and it is a very great and fatal mistake, to think that any doctrine or any belief whatsoever can be otherwise of any benefit to men, than as it is fitted to promote this main end.

Dr. CLARKE

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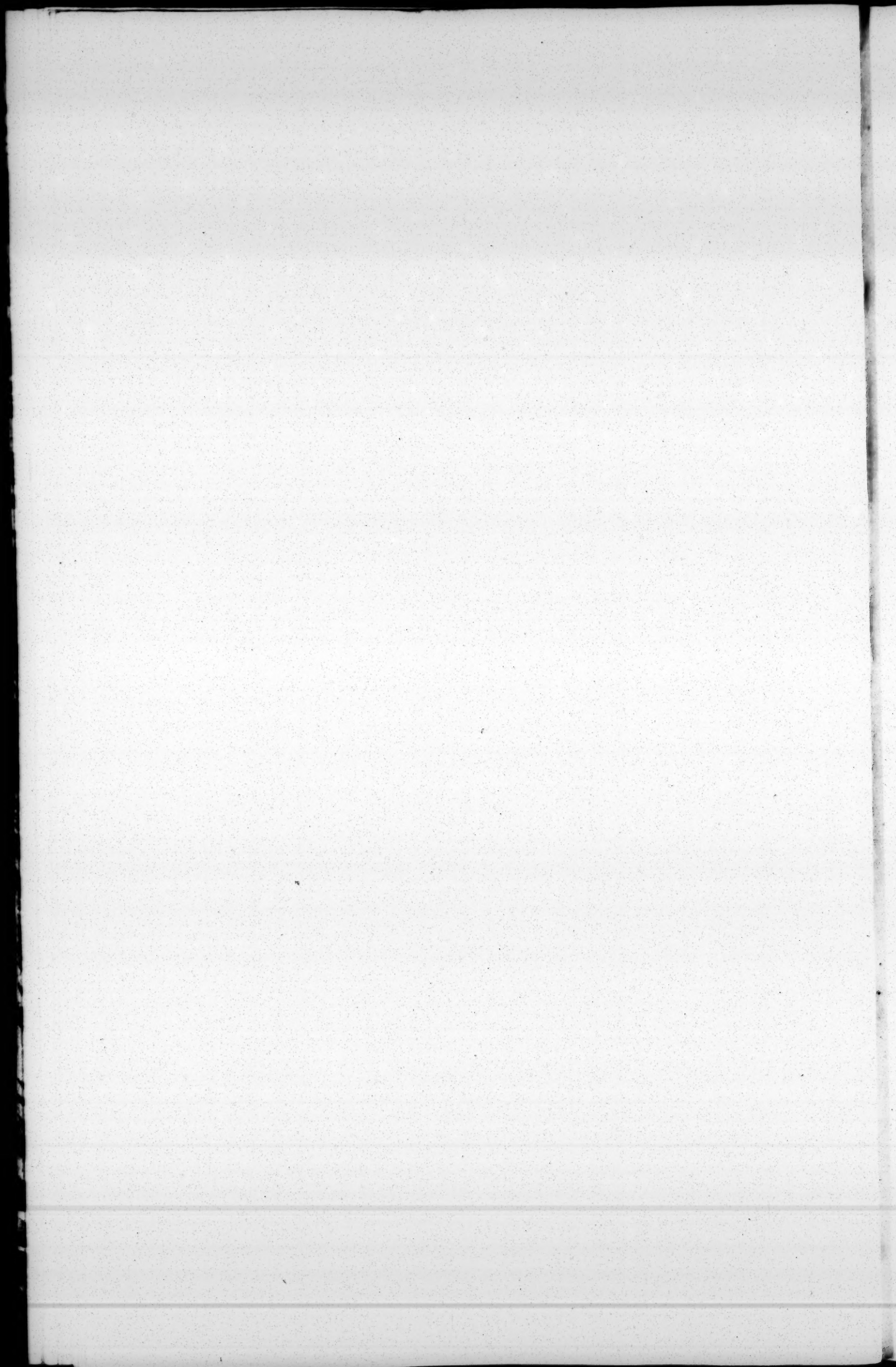
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P R E F A C E.

THE author of the following Treatise adopted, for many years, the principles of those ancient and modern divines who had the reputation of being most orthodox. For some time past, he hath presumed to judge for himself; and has in few particulars departed, not without some dissidence, from those whom he had esteemed the great luminaries of the gospel. Though he hereby seems a friend to private judgment, yet he thinks that the opinion of no indi-

individual ought to be embraced in opposition to long-received sentiments, before those sentiments are shewn erroneous, and unless the new opinion is founded upon principles of reason or revelation. The author having endeavoured to refute the position—*that Jesus died instead of us*, and believing that he has both reason and revelation on his side, humbly submits what appears to him to be the ends of Christ's death, to the public. He hopes his readers will give him credit for the profession, that he has the glory of his Creator, and the good of mankind, greatly at heart. Whether either of these laudable ends will be promoted by the ensuing treatise, it is not in his power to determine: but, however that may be, he has the secret satisfaction of intending well; and

and whether he has offered a just explanation of the ways of God to man, or not, he has confidence in the candour of learned men, that his good intentions will screen him from the severity of censure.



A

Plain and Rational Account

O F

MAN'S SALVATION

B Y

JESUS CHRIST.

In due time Christ died for the ungodly.

ROM. v. 6.

B*Y due time* we are to understand the most convenient time, the time which God judged most proper, and may be the time that he fixed upon from the foundation of the world, the time when the Tempter should bruise the Messiah's heel.

From these words, *Christ died for the ungodly*, and such like expressions, it has been frequently

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B

said,

said, that Jesus died in our stead, or instead of us : a doctrine that seems to have been wholly founded upon the meaning of two Greek prepositions, translated into our language by the word *for*, which like the Greek words doth sometimes signify *instead of*. But when this is admitted, it must not, it cannot be denied, that they are often employed to convey the idea of *on account of*, *for the sake of* *. In this sense it was, in our humble opinion, that Christ died for the ungodly ; not instead of them, but on their account, or for their sakes : and our reasons for thinking so are—1. We learn from the writings of the same apostle, that *Christ died for the sins of the ungodly*. Here the

* ὑπὲρ signifies *on account of*, or *for the sake of*, in the following passages :—*Which I will give for the life of the world*, John vi. 51. *That ye faint not at my tribulations for you*, Eph. iii. 13. *Christ died for your sins*, 1 Cor. xv. 3. *Worthy of the kingdom of God for which ye suffer*, 2 Thess. i. 5.—Among heathen writers it is used in the same sense—*Ἀσχυνομαι ὑπὲρ σε Διῶ*, Lucian.—A learned commentator, who endeavours to persuade his readers that Jesus died instead of offending man, confesseth that ὑπὲρ doth in some places signify *on account of*, as in that sentence—*Why are they then baptized for the dead ?*

Ἀντὶ also signifies *on account of* in the following texts :—*For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother*, Eph. v. 31. *Who for the joy that was set before him*, Heb. xii. 2. *That take and give unto them for thee and me*, Matt. xvii. 27.—It is used in the same signification by Demosthenes—*Ἀντὶ ἀρετῆς τιμαδαί*. De Coron.

preposition

preposition $\dot{\iota}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho$ cannot signify *instead of*, but must be understood to signify *on account of*, or *for the sake of*. When therefore we read that our Lord died for the ungodly, we are to understand that he died on account of the sins of the ungodly.—2. We cannot find what sort of death Jesus died instead of man. The death he underwent was that of crucifixion. Was it ever revealed, was it ever surmised, that man was to be crucified for his offences? No. We have no reason then to believe that Jesus suffered that death instead of us. Dr. Whitby was of opinion that “the Gentiles were not subject to the particular maledictions contained in the law of Moses, because that law was not given to them, but only to the Jews.” Now if all mankind were liable to the punishment threatened to the first transgression, and the Gentiles were not subject to the death or curse of crucifixion, then crucifixion was not the punishment denounced upon Adam and his posterity. Did Jesus die, or suffer a separation of soul and body, instead of us? No; that death every man suffers himself. Was the death due to our first parents, for disobedience, eternal death, i. e. eternal misery, as too many have erroneously asserted? Who will say that the Son of God felt the misery of this death? I believe there will not be found

one person who will be daring enough to say this. We may reasonably conclude then that Jesus did not die instead of the ungodly *.

If it shall be asked, why then did he die? We answer, because his death was necessary to our salvation; which we shall endeavour to put in such a point of view, as will evince the truth of the opinion, and make the scheme of our salvation a pleasing object of contemplation.

It has indeed been thought that the Almighty could have remitted the offences of man, and made him partaker of heavenly bliss, if he had been so disposed, by his own free will. But we are of opinion that he could not do this consistently with the character of a just judge, whose duty it is to order the infliction of the decreed punishment for the discouragement of future offence—of a wise legislator, who finds it necessary to take care that the sentence of condemnation be duly executed, for the better security of obedience to his laws in future—of a lover of righteousness, the sinner being consigned to another master—and of an all-wise Being, doing nothing in vain; for pardon of sin, and admission

* In like manner may all the reasoning, and all the passages of scripture, formerly urged to prove that Jesus died instead of us, be fully and fairly answered, till it be shewn *what* death he died instead of us.

into heaven, would be of no advantage to a sinner, who, while he continued such, could not be happy in that seat of blessedness.

If Jehovah could not, consistently with his character, pardon sinful man, man must die by the terms of the first covenant. Hence arose the necessity of a Mediator, to effect a reconciliation between God and man.

If the Father be a God of mercy, that amiable attribute would dispose him either to propose or listen to terms of accommodation, and to enter into a new covenant with man; not to avert the execution of the sentence passed upon offenders under the former covenant (for the execution of a law, by inflicting the punishment denounced, was as necessary as the enacting it), but to raise us, after having suffered the punishment, from death to life—we say, the amiable attribute of mercy would dispose God to enter into a new covenant, if a suitable mediator could be found: and if the Father be a God of justice, and made us rational and free agents, it cannot be questioned that his mercy would shew itself in such a manner, in this new covenant, as would be consistent with the strictest rules of justice, and with the reason and free agency of man. Hence it seems reasonable to believe that he would reveal to us, by the Mediator, the

method by which our forfeited happiness might be regained—that he would likewise employ the most effectual means to incense us against vice, and to excite us to recover our purity, the want of which is the sole obstacle to our eternal felicity—that upon man shewing an earnest desire to become pure as his Maker is pure, and manifesting that desire by the most resolute and persevering endeavours, he would, upon the request of the Mediator, afford him some assistance to carry him on to the required perfection—and that if the Mediator could deliver him out of the prison of death, and present him at the heavenly throne of grace as an object deserving mercy (having made all the satisfaction in his power for having violated the legislative authority of the Father, by taking shame to himself, by confession and contrition, by purifying his affections, and a more circumspect behaviour), he would give him a place in his celestial kingdom; pardoning mere infirmities, the infirmities of Adam, who was led into transgression by the imposition of a crafty angelic spirit; and the infirmities of us his descendants, as deriving a corrupted nature from a corrupted stock.

Such seems to be the *mystery of God's will, which he hath purposed in himself, according to his good pleasure; wherein he hath abounded to us*

in all wisdom and prudence: which we shall now endeavour to make good.

In the first place then we observe, that Jesus Christ was a suitable Mediator.—It seems necessary for a Mediator that he should be free from the offence for which he mediates forgiveness; and, further, that in this case he should be perfect in holiness, because God cannot be supposed to grant favours to any being at the intercession of a sinner. In these respects Jesus was undoubtedly a suitable Mediator, as will be seen below.—“It was necessary,” saith Philo, “that he who performs the office of a priest to the Father of the world, should have for his advocate his Son, *most perfect in virtue*, to obtain the pardon of sins, and the participation of the greatest blessings *.”—“The Mediator,” saith Lactantius, “was to be an *example* of virtue and holiness to the redeemed †.”

A Mediator should be a person having a tender commiseration for the offender, and an interest with the offended to procure pardon and blessings in future. Now the Messiah cannot but have the tenderest concern for man, as he created him for happiness, and therefore may be sup-

* De Vit. Mos.

† De Ver. Sapient. lib. iv. p. 430.

posed solicitous to procure it for him. The same Messiah must be supposed to have the most powerful interest with the great God Jehovah, as he is confessed to be his best beloved Son.

It may be supposed also, from St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, that a Mediator should be a partaker of the nature of the offended and of the offender. *There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*, who is also the *Son of God*. Philo seems to have entertained this opinion; saying that "the Father of all things hath granted
 " to his most ancient Word an excellent gift, viz.
 " that, standing in the confines of both, he
 " should make a difference betwixt the Maker
 " and the thing made, as being an intercessor
 " for mortal man to the immortal God, and an
 " ambaffador from the king to his subject; in
 " which gift he rejoiceth, saying, And I stood
 " betwixt God and you; being neither unbe-
 " gotten as God, nor made as we are, but a
 " middle of the extremes *." In another place,
 —" If I may say the truth, a middle between
 " both; that men may atone God by a Medi-
 " ator, and God may reach forth and distri-
 " bute his favours by a certain minister †."

* Quis Rer. Divin. Hæref.

† De Monarch.

Our Mediator ought to be of the same nature with us, that he might experience the variety and power of temptations; and thereby be more urgent in his intercessions for us, even to strong crying and tears; as well as to give us an example of the possibility of overcoming temptations to sin, and of practising every virtue*: and of the same nature with the party offended, that he might know, and press upon us, the absolute necessity of our conforming to the will of the Creator. Jesus was a proper Mediator in these cases, having been exposed to the alluring and terrifying temptations of the enemy; and by exhorting us to that holiness which shone conspicuously in the Father, teaching us hereby that we could have no enjoyment in his presence, unless we become holy as he is holy. “Had our Mediator been God alone,” says Lactantius, “he could not have afforded us examples of virtue; if he had been man alone, he could not have prevailed on us to observe the laws of justice, unless his virtue and authority had been greater than those of men†; for, being without this carnal body of ours, he

* Oportet magistrum doctoremque virtutis hominum similem fieri; ut, vincendo peccatum, doceat hominem vinci ab eo posse peccatum.—Lactan. de Vera Sapientia. lib. iv. p. 428.

† Ib. p. 430.

“ could

“ could not practise what he should have
“ taught *.”

For which reason that author declares that neither mere man, nor God alone, could be a competent instructor of the world : not man, unless he was God also, that by his divine authority he might lay upon man an absolute necessity of submitting to his injunctions ; not God, unless he was man also, that by practising his own precepts he might convince others of the necessity of yielding obedience to them †.

A Mediator is in some cases responsible for the future good behaviour of the offender, and for his pardon and reconciliation with the person offended. Hence he is called a pledge to both parties by Philo : to the Creator, engaging that all mankind shall not corrupt itself, and apostatize ; to the creature, that he may have a good hope that the merciful God will not wholly overlook his own work—for I denounce peaceable things to the creature from the God of peace ‡. In these cases no being but Jesus could be a competent Mediator ; for, as Athanasius held, it was not in the power of any being to deliver from corruption what was

* Lactan. de Vera Sapien. lib. iv. p. 427.

† Ib. p. 429.

‡ Vid. Quis Rer. Divin. Hæres.

subject to it, but of him (our Saviour) who in the beginning created all things out of nothing *. In another part of his works—"No Being could renew the image of God in man, but he who was the image of God †. And, with respect to our future felicity, the same author gives it as his opinion, in the same oration, that "no being could render that immortal "which was mortal, but he who is life itself, "viz. our Lord Jesus Christ." And Ludovicus Vives, in his notes upon St. Augustin, observes that our Mediator invites us to himself in his humanity, that his divinity might not terrify us; and by his divinity he brings us to himself, and confers upon us beatitude. Wherefore no other being but a man like ourselves could call and allure us; and none but God, the fountain of bliss, could make us blessed ‡.

Having thus manifested the fitness of the Son for the mediatorial office between God and us, we shall observe here, that Jesus was not only a Mediator, but a contracting party. Conditions were laid upon him: he must descend from hea-

* De Incarnatione Verb. tom. i. p. 54.—Vid. etiam Cyril. Alex. lib. i. p. 13.—Cyril. Ierosol. Catech. illum. 6. p. 46.—Niceph. Episc. Constantinop. in Actis Synod. Ephes. p. 308.

† Ib. p. 72.

‡ De Civit. Dei, lib. ix. cap. 15.

ven;

ven; he must die; he must rise again from the dead; he must ascend into heaven. The necessity of these things is twofold. The first kind of necessity arises from the consideration, that Christ could not give us eternal life without his suffering and performing these things. Without shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins, saith St. Paul; the death of our Saviour was therefore necessary, because we could not obtain salvation without it: and, if that was the case, his descent also upon earth was necessary, because he could not have died had he not descended and taken our nature upon him, by which he became susceptible of the arrow of death. And if it was the will of the Father, that Jesus should raise up all those whom he had given him, at the last, then his resurrection was necessary; because, if he had not raised himself, he could not have raised us. And, if it was fore-ordained and prefigured that our High Priest should enter the Holy of Holies to obtain eternal life for us, then it was necessary that our Lord should enter into heaven; because, if he himself had not ascended thither, he could not carry us into that holy place. But now he, having entered into heaven, hath rendered it accessible to us, say some of the fathers.—The second kind of necessity arises from
from

from the circumstances of his descent, death, resurrection, and ascension, being pregnant with the most forcible motives to allure and impel us to work out our salvation ; without which, we see not how we could be prevailed upon to set about the work, or enabled to perform it ; and which, in our humble conception, was the foundation of the divine decree, and of the necessity of the above circumstances, to save us in a way consistent with the principles of equity.

When the sentence of death was passed upon us, which could not be reversed, we could entertain no thoughts of being rescued out of the hands of death, or of rising to eternal life. In this situation of distress, we could have no incitement to abandon the pleasures of vice, or to attempt the purification of our nature. An information therefore of the possibility of our obtaining eternal life even yet, was necessary : and, if we could not learn this of any being with that degree of certainty as of our Mediator—if no one could have gained it a reception so fully and completely among men as he who should come forth from God—then the descent of Jesus seems to have been necessary on this account.

In St. John's gospel we read that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ ; by which grace and truth, as they stand opposed to the law of Moses,

we are to understand the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation : and this scheme, as it came by Jesus Christ alone, so it is probable that it would have come by no human being ; for no man hath seen God, at any time, to know his intentions : nor yet by any of the angels ; for, by their desire to look into it, it is evident that they knew it not. But Jesus Christ, who lay in the bosom of his Father, and was acquainted with his will, hath revealed it.

Again—as a conformity to the nature of God is necessary to the enjoyment of his presence, and no being could shew us the nature of God but he who is the image of God, it seems necessary that Jesus should shew us the Father. Now we learn from the sacred record, that the Messiah did come to shew us the Father. We will not shew how he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father, in all his glorious perfections ; but in two only, which may be sufficient for our purpose.—And,

In the first place, he stands forth an instance of most affectionate love or mercy, both in the Father, and in himself. The Father, though man had disobeyed his commands, still loved him ; and out of mercy proposed to the Son a scheme whereby he might yet be saved. He gave his only-begotten Son to die for him ;

having prepared a body for him, like unto that of mankind : and the Son undertook to execute it, however grievous might be the means. He spared not his own body, but gave it up for us all. Which love we are to imitate, not only from these illustrious examples—not only from the command of Christ, *this is my commandment, that ye love one another*—but from these considerations, in particular, that God is love; and that he who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him: and that he who loveth not, dwelleth not in God, nor God in him; but walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth.

In the second place, our Lord must be confessed to be perfect, even as his Father which is in heaven is perfect. As to the law of Moses, it is witnessed of him that he fulfilled all righteousness. In obedience to the will of God he was blameless, ever preferring his Father's will to his own. *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*, was his language, when the most terrifying prospect was before his eyes. In the conduct of himself he was sober, chaste, and temperate in all things. To mankind he was compassionate, courteous, easy to be entreated, abounding in good works to all, even to his very enemies : he forewarned Judas, who was about to betray him, of his desperate

perate condition ; he healed the ear of Malchas, who came to apprehend him ; and for those who crucified him he prayed, in the midst of his agonies he prayed, that God would forgive them.

Such an exalted strain of goodness was this, that it hath been reckoned a miracle, a work which in difficulty far exceeded his raising the dead. In short, we apprehend nothing can be adduced to impeach his character, since he is styled the Holy One by David—*Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption* ; by St. Peter—*But ye denied the Holy One and the Just* ; by an angel from heaven—*Therefore that Holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God* ; by a fallen angel—*I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God*.—He proved himself a perfectly righteous man by the manner of his death, according to Plato's idea of such a character. "To approve a man thoroughly righteous," saith the philosopher, "he must be scourged, tortured, bound, &c. and having suffered all evils, must be hung on the cross." De Rep. 2. These things our Lord endured with such meekness, such patience, such fortitude, such resignation, and such charity, that, upon the conclusion of his sufferings, his enemies, his executioners, pronounced him a righteous man, and the Son of God.

To this holiness he exhorteth us, by an assurance that a blessedness attends it—*blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*; from whence it may be inferred, that they who are not pure in heart shall not see God: which is confirmed by one of his disciples, who hath declared that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*.

Now where is the man who would not rejoice at such amazing acts of goodness? Where is he who would not love and reverence such a friend to mankind? and if we love the man, and are enraptured by such a life of integrity and beneficence, what more powerful affections could seize the mind, to carry it insensibly into the imitation of the pattern? Who is the wretch so hardened, as not to be mollified into obedience by the prospect of so great a blessing, promised by him who has the power to procure it; and by the fear of a dereliction which is punishment itself?

As it seems to have been necessary for us to know how to resist and repel our adversary the Devil, our Lord came down to shew us the means. By the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, he baffled the Tempter in three several attacks, and obliged him to quit the field. Who is the unprejudiced person

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that

that would not press through the crowd to see such a victor, and hail him with hosannahs—*blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, hosannah in the highest?* Who is he that would not be encouraged to employ the same victorious instrument against so formidable and implacable an enemy, when his dearest and most important interest is concerned?

By the Messiah's descent we learn, that the sinner will not only be punished with the privation of the fountain of bliss, but will hear that dreadful sentence pronounced upon him—*Go, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels*: a most alarming judgment! big with so powerful a motive to compel us to work out our salvation, that one can hardly think it possible to fail of driving us out of a vicious into a virtuous course of life. Indeed, he who cannot be influenced by the fear of such a condemnation, will be deemed worthy to feel it.

Thus far concerning the necessity of the descent of Jesus upon earth, and the motives arising from it.

Let us now investigate the necessity of his death.—It has been repeatedly asserted, that he died to satisfy the demands that justice had upon man for his transgression. But if our
Lord

Lord did not die for, *i. e.* instead of, man, we cannot conceive in what sense he could die to satisfy justice, which could have demands on sinful man alone.—But, to settle this point with some degree of certainty, we will enquire—

1. What death was denounced against Adam's transgression. 2. What demands justice could make on that account.

1. For our greater satisfaction in the first enquiry, we must consider Jehovah as a temporal governor or legislator to man*: and, if we consider him in this light, the sentence of condemnation for offences will be extended no farther than to corporal punishments, or corporal death†. Future punishments will not constitute any part of the condemnation, any more than they do

* Theophilus Antiochenus tells his reader, that Adam and Eve, being but newly brought into the world, were in simplicity to be wholly ordered and governed by the will and pleasure of their heavenly parent.

† We know of no man who hath supposed Jesus to have died any other death than that of the body, whether he died in our stead, or on account of our sins: therefore we have reason to believe that the death threatened to the first instance of disobedience was corporal death only. That this notion, though the offspring of our reasoning, hath not been unknown to others, appears from what Bp. Burnet saith, viz. that “some think that the threatening made to Adam (he should surely die) is to be taken literally, and is to be carried no farther than to natural death.” 39 Art. p. 137.

that of an earthly governor, legislator, or judge. As to the punishment of fire mentioned in the New Testament, it is not clear that that was decreed for the first offence of man. Bodily death may have been the punishment for a breach of the first covenant; and the torment of fire may have been appointed as the peculiar punishment of the transgressors of the second covenant: and an opinion of the Jews, that Satan himself did not know of his future punishment by fire before the coming of Jesus, seems to countenance the conjecture.—But, further, if we all die in Adam, the death can be no other than the death of the body, for that death only do we undergo through Adam's transgression, which therefore must have been the death threatened to our first parents. We may add, that there is a reason why the sentence of condemnation should extend no farther than to the dissolution of this carnal body, which is this—that God, intending to give the whole race of men an opportunity of saving themselves, would not condemn them to eternal death and misery; for such condemnation would have a degree of cruelty in it, and also frustrate his own intentions: for seeing that a sentence of bodily death is executed upon us all, which was not denounced against us at any other time, that
must

must have been the death threatened at the beginning, or else we suffer a punishment never denounced against us. And if this was the death threatened, and God daily executes it upon some of us, notwithstanding Christ's death; he would for the same reason have sent us all into eternal death, if that had been the death due to the first instance of sin, notwithstanding the death of Jesus. But, by the sentence of punishment reaching our bodies only, we may, notwithstanding the death of them, rise to life immortal.

2. Let us consider, in the next place, what demand justice can make on this occasion. If justice consisteth in rendering to every one his due, and bodily death was decreed for disobedience, bodily death only was due to justice. Now if we all suffer this death ourselves, as it is certain we all die in Adam, *i. e.* for Adam's transgression, justice must surely be satisfied. What justice is that which demands the life of an innocent person instead of that of the guilty? We know not. What justice is that which is not contented with inflicting the threatened punishment upon the offender, but requires the punishment of an innocent person to be added to that of the offender? Is it not injustice, an

injustice too shocking to be conceived of the most just judge?—Besides this, in all vicarial satisfactions, the punishment is transferred from one object to another; but in the case before us both parties suffer. The death of Jesus therefore cannot be esteemed, in our humble apprehension, a vicarial satisfaction; and for that reason we are of opinion that he did not die to satisfy justice. If he did die to satisfy justice, then, justice being satisfied by his death, we ought to stand upon the same ground as before the first act of disobedience; and consequently we ought not to die for Adam's offence, because the atonement which Christ made, implies forgiveness, and exemption from punishment. But, seeing that we all go down to the shades below for or on account of the sin of our common parents, it cannot be said that our Lord died to satisfy justice.

Why then did he die? He died not only for the remission of sins under a former covenant, but because his death was to be the foundation of all his Father's mercies. In his blood was to be established the covenant of grace and mercy; *i. e.* the covenant of grace and mercy was to be established upon his submitting to do his Father's will, in undergoing the most painful
and

and ignominious death of the cross*: a death determined on by the Father, to serve as an everlasting memorial of his abhorrence of sin; and consented to by the Son, that through *suffering*, or being made perfect by *sufferings*, he might become the author of salvation to all them that obey him. Hence all the blessings of the Gospel, which contains the covenant of grace and mercy, are attributed to the death or blood of Christ. We, who were enemies in our minds by wicked works, are reconciled in or by the *body* of his *flesh* through death †.—We are sanctified by his blood ‡, justified by his blood §. But when we read that it is God who purifies our hearts through faith ||, that it is he who hath reconciled us to himself ¶, that it is he who justifieth **, that it is he who sanctifieth ††—

we

* Adam brought the sentence of death upon us all; and the promise of deliverance from that death is only made us in and through Jesus Christ, by virtue of that *death* he suffered.—Whitby.

† Col. i. 21, 22. ‡ Heb. xiii. 12. § Rom. v. 9.

|| Acts, xv. 9. ¶ 2 Cor. v. 18. ** Rom. viii. 33.

†† John, xvii. 17.—Should any man make objection to the christian religion from the seeming contradiction in these passages, and from what is to be found in other parts of the sacred writings, in which we are said to be sanctified by the spirit, or to sanctify ourselves, the objection may be easily removed, and the seeming contradiction reconciled, after

we cannot ascribe these blessings to any innate virtue in the blood or death of Christ, but to a promise of the Father specified in the covenant. It is not material whether the covenant was made before the foundation of the world, agreeable to a conceit of the Jews; or at the beginning of the world, according to what was said of Jesus, that he was slain from the foundation of the world, or to what we read of Adam, that he sinned at the beginning; upon which account of his sinning a new covenant became necessary, and may reasonably be supposed to have been made upon that event between the Father and the Son.

As the covenant was made in, or through, the blood or death of Christ, so the benefits are ensured to us thereby; for he, having obtained the blessings of the gospel for us by suffering death, hath bequeathed them unto us, upon our compliance with the conditions required therein: we say, he hath bequeathed them unto us, for he is to be considered, as St. Paul viewed him, in the light of a *testator*, making his last will and testament; which will and testament, that *where he is, there shall we be also*, John

this manner, *viz.* we make ourselves holy through the grace and favour of God, who gives us the assistance of his holy spirit, for the sake of Christ's death.

xvii. 24—that *we shall never perish, but have eternal life*, John x. 28. — will continue for ever in force, as he is now dead. His death therefore may be esteemed necessary on this account: for, as St. Paul hath noticed, *where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth.* Heb. ix. 16, 17.

Now we having the fullest assurance of so many and great blessings, by a covenant made between God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, and by the will and testament of the latter, we have the most alluring motives to invite us to employ the most vigorous exertions for obtaining them. And how thankful ought we to be for this most gracious covenant! Under the first covenant perfect obedience was required, and that very justly; for Adam was created in purity, and might have continued in it. But under this covenant an earnest desire, and resolute endeavours, to regain our lost sanctity, with a sincere and afflicting repentance for offences, will be accepted; and probably for this reason—that we are now born with the seeds of corruption in us.

If it shall be asked, what was the necessity of this covenant being made in the blood or death
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of Christ, preferably to that of any other being? it may be answered, that as God is a being of perfect purity, and the covenant was intended to excite to purity, that most holy Being would not make choice of the blood or death of man, or of any impure creature, in and through which to make such a covenant; nor indeed of any of the angelic host, as it is probable that, had an angel taken upon him human nature, he would have yielded to the temptations incident thereto. It became necessary, therefore, that this covenant should be made in the blood of a divine person; for in such an one only could unfulled purity be expected to be found. For this reason, among others, it is probable that the Son of God saw it necessary to take our nature upon him.

The death of the Messiah was likewise necessary; as he, being an high priest, must have something also to offer: *for every priest being ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices, it is of necessity that this man have somewhat to offer.* And seeing that the blood of bulls and of goats could not purify or wash away sin, and that such a sacrifice became us which was without blemish and without spot, our High Priest must have the blood of some more illustrious, the blood of an innocent, sacrifice; and therefore the blood of a divine person, his own blood, to offer. *He being*
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*an high priest of good things to come, by his own blood entered into the holy place, into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us : for as it was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, viz. the sacrifices of beasts ; so was it necessary that the heavenly things themselves should be purified with better sacrifices than these. Thus it became him, from whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in his design of bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings : i. e. in God's design to save mankind it was necessary ; for the words *it becometh* have that signification in the gospel of St. Matthew, as in that saying of our Lord, *It becometh us to fulfil all righteousness* :—we say, it was necessary that Jesus should be made perfect by sufferings ; for, had he not suffered death, he could not have had a sacrifice to offer adequate to the purpose : or, in other words, he would not have had his uncontaminated blood to present to the Father, in confirmation of his having suffered death ; by which, according to the agreement, or the mercy of the Father, in the second covenant, he was to obtain remission of sins, and everlasting life, for all those who should perform sincere, though not perfect, obedience to all his commands.*

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The death of our Lord may have been necessary also, not only to assure all his faithful followers of the certainty of their salvation, as noted above, but to convince all mankind that there is now no other method by which they can be saved; his will and testament, by which the blessings of the gospel are bequeathed to us, and which contain the conditions of obtaining them, being rendered unalterable for ever by his death.

The death of Christ was necessary to our receiving the *Comforter*; for, had he not died, we should not have enjoyed the benefit of that holy spirit, as our Saviour himself declared to his disciples. If he had had in himself the power of sending the *Comforter* to whom he would, he might have given him to many before his death; but, as his death was previously necessary, in order that he might be entitled to the power of sending him, it seems that he had that power in consequence of a promise made by the Father, upon his engaging to undergo the pains of death. Indeed, St. Peter speaks of such a promise in his address to the Jews—*This Jesus having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost.* Acts, ii. 23.—And, what is more, our Lord saith, *Behold, I send the promise of the Father upon you.* Luke, xxiv. 49.

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We have suggested before that the death of our Lord was determined on by the Father, to serve as an everlasting memorial of his abhorrence of sin : indeed it seems to have been necessary, as no other person could gain authority or interest among men sufficient to perpetuate the divine displeasure. The disorders and corruptions that reign through nature, would not have been uncontrovertible proofs of Jehovah's indignation, nor indeed would the daily death of mankind ; for these, to the end of the world, would in all human probability have been imputed, as they have been heretofore, to natural causes : and, however great the blessings are which we partake of through the death of Christ, it was possible for us to forget both the event and the benefits resulting from it. But the end seems to have been effectually provided for, through the authority of the Son of God, by the institution of sacrifices ; which, from the time of offending, prefigured the death of Christ, till the great event took place : and by his appointing afterwards bread and wine, when consecrated, to be received in commemoration of his death by all his disciples throughout the world, to the end of time. He hath had influence upon us to succeed in the design to this day ;

day; and we have no reason to doubt of the success of it through all future generations.

There is another reason for the death of Christ, which we shall notice to our readers presently.

The manner also of his death was likewise necessary, according to the opinion of Plato, cited above, to prove him a thoroughly righteous man.

Let us now advert to some of the motives we may derive from our Lord's death, and the benefits thereof already mentioned: and, in our judgment indeed, they are sufficiently pressing to provoke us to every good work.

When we read that our Lord and Saviour was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief, oppressed and afflicted, despised and rejected of men; that he was condemned to death, scourged, mocked, spit upon, smote on the head, pierced in the side with a spear, had vinegar given him to drink mingled with gall; that, in the most excruciating agony, he prayed with so much earnestness that the bitter cup might pass from him; that he sweat as it were great drops of blood; that he was esteemed stricken and smitten of God, *i. e.* accursed of God, or rejected by him; and at last crucified—we say, when we read that the severity of the divine wrath was
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thus exercised upon him, in every form afflicting to humanity—upon him his Son, his only Son, his well-beloved Son, when clothed with our nature, on account of our sins—we cannot but esteem sin and the sanctity of God to be irreconcilable. We cannot help loving, and endeavouring to please him, who suffered so much for us; *who gave himself for us for this end, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* Surely we must detest and forsake sin, which brought upon him so large a load of misery. If the spotless Son of God suffered so much, what must the unrepenting and unreformed sinner expect? what but the extremity of divine wrath? He can have but little claim to common sense, who can remain unmoved by so great a fear.

When we are informed that our Mediator has made ample atonement for sin, and hath bequeathed everlasting life to all who perform the stipulated conditions of the new covenant, can we desire greater encouragement to animate our endeavours to obtain it? If the pleasing view will not urge us forward, surely the deplorable prospect of wretchedness, that remains for the disobedient, will affright us from the paths of

vice, and push us into the road to virtue and to happiness.

For the honour of human nature, we will believe that a wise man must be wrought upon by these powerful motives, to be extremely anxious to please the Lord his God in every thing. But, alas ! his nature is so vitiated, that he may truly say with the apostle—*The good, that I would, I do not ; but the evil, which I would not, that I do : so that, though to will good is present with me, how to perform that which is good, I find not.* Rom. vii. 18, 19.—Our case then is still to be lamented. Let us enquire what benefit we derive from Christ's death, to enable us to overcome this strong propensity to evil, and to conform our practice to our virtuous inclinations. When the Messiah had informed his disciples that he was about to go his way to him that sent him, we read that sorrow filled their hearts. Upon which he endeavours to comfort them, by saying—*It is expedient for you that I go away ; for, if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you ; but, if I depart, I will send him to you.*

This Comforter is a spirit of holiness, which excites us to will that which is good, by a consciousness of duty, by raising in the soul a complacency in the thought and contemplation of
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doing right, and by impelling us into an approbation of virtuous actions in other people. He gives resolution and strength to our wills, by representing to the mind the advantages and blessings which will ensue from a course of life pleasing to our Creator. He confirms and establishes us in a race of godliness, by giving the soul a most pleasing sensation upon performing a laudable action, whether it be that of suppressing a vicious inclination, forgiving and profiting an enemy, or relieving the distressed; and by raising our ideas of that blessedness which is prepared for the godly in heaven, giving us a lively foretaste of it, and a well-grounded hope of obtaining it.

At other times he exhibits to us the baseness, the shame, and the evils, temporal and eternal, which await the actions of iniquity; and that in such strong colours, that we find ourselves forced, as it were, to reject the temptations thereto. He not unfrequently gives disappointment to the means employed to bring about unlawful designs; that, checked in our mad career, we may stand still for a time, and after a little reflection conclude that we were pursuing forbidden pleasures. There have been instances, we believe, of his drawing a man from his evil purposes, by inflaming his mind with some new and more

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innocent object of desire. He hath often retarded the precipitancy of youths, by giving them a gentle foretaste of the miseries of the worm that never dies, in what they feel from the rebukes of a tender conscience; who by these means have been so worked upon, as to return to a better course of life. But this is not all; he likewise maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

By all these assistances we may justly hope to rise superior to our spiritual enemy: for what can animate us more to fight a good fight, than to know that we have a friend at hand, who, if we will suffer ourselves to be directed by him, will render us invincible? we say invincible, for greater is he that is for us than he that is against us.

We will suppose a man, by these motives, to be greatly improved in goodness. But though he be improved, yet, as he lies under the sentence of death, he must die; and remain in the bonds thereof, unless he can raise himself from the dead, or some other being will exert himself in his behalf. But, alas! he hath no ability in himself; and we have no authority to suppose that the Father would raise him. Here then we should have had another great obstacle to our salvation, had not the Messiah stood our friend.

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He, in the excess of goodness, died, that he might descend into the mansions of departed spirits, on purpose to deliver us out of them. The Devil, the lord of death, having nothing to lay to the charge of Christ, could have no pretence to confine him in the chambers of death: no, nor yet power; for the Father approving of his Son's perfect innocence, gave him power to raise himself from the dead. And he (the Son) having finished all that was require^d of him, for obtaining salvation for us, had power given him to raise those also who shall be found to have resisted the Devil, and to have become through regeneration the sons and daughters of God.— Thus may Jesus, by his death, be said to have destroyed or frustrated the power of him who was lord of death: and, having the keys of death and Hades, the place where the dead are confined, he can set at liberty whom he will.

There are two circumstances which point out the necessity of Christ's resurrection. One is, that, had he not raised himself, all his preaching would have been vain. No one would have believed that he had power to raise others from the dead, had he not first raised himself; and consequently we could have no reason to become his disciples, to embrace his doctrine of salvation, or yield obedience to his precepts.

But now that he hath raised himself from the dead, and hath promised to raise us up also, we may rest assured that, notwithstanding the sentence of death lies against us, we shall be raised from the dead. *We are begotten, saith the apostle, unto a lively hope (or a hope of everlasting life) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Pet. i. 3.—To this end Christ both died and rose again, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and the living.*

The resurrection of our Lord was likewise necessary to his ascension into heaven; for, had he not risen from the dead, he could not have ascended into that holy place.

His ascension was necessary, not only to present himself, after death, in the holiest of holies; but necessary likewise to present us at the throne of grace. Had not he ascended thither, how could we have ascended to that celestial place? or, if we could have mounted thither, how could we have dared to appear before the majesty of heaven, whom we had offended? Had we had no person to introduce us to our God, no person to plead our cause, or intercede for us, we might have been banished from the presence of that blessed and blessing Spirit. But it is our happiness that our Mediator, having power to ascend into the highest heavens,

heavens, can and will carry us up also, and will present us to his Father as his children, being the children of the resurrection; and presenting there, in the holiest of holies, his own precious blood, will obtain for us, by virtue of the divine promise in the covenant, an absolute pardon of all our sins, and the reward of obedient children: a most consummate and eternal felicity!

The resurrection and ascension of our Lord were necessary, not only to give a spur or vigour to the incitement we may have received from other circumstances, to virtue; but to urge us on to all diligence, that we may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. The encouragement we derive from other circumstances to correct and sanctify the corruption of our nature, would have proved defective and vain, without the best-grounded assurance (which we happily have by the resurrection and ascension of the Messiah) that we shall be raised from the dead, and admitted into the blessed abode of heaven.

Thus hath Jesus regained for us every thing lost by Adam. Though we die in consequence of Adam's transgression, we rise to life immortal through Jesus Christ—through his mediation, descent, death, resurrection, and ascension, and the motives arising from those events.

That the foregoing account of our salvation is really just and true, may be presumed—

1. From what St. Paul says first of God—that he, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to *bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities*; where the prime blessedness, or the cause of all the blessedness we receive from God through Christ, is not eternal life, but the turning us from our iniquities: and secondly of Jesus—that he *gave himself for us*, that he might *redeem us from all iniquity*, and *purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*.

2. From hence—that it is by these means, by good works, or doing the will of God, that we become the children of God.

3. From the consideration that, as Jesus died for our sins, so he rose again for our justification.

4. From his having begotten us, by his own resurrection, unto an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.

To this scheme of salvation, we apprehend, no reasonable objections can be made—

1. As the mediatorship, descent, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus alone, and of no other being, were necessary to our salvation.

If the above-mentioned circumstances were requisite to qualify a Mediator between God and us, then Jesus alone was qualified to be our Mediator: and if his mediation was crowned with success, and affords thereby a great encouragement to us to attempt our salvation, then his mediation alone was necessary to it.

If we could learn from no other being that we may yet be saved, with that entire confidence as we do from Jesus Christ; if he alone could reveal to us the infallible means of regaining God's favour; if he alone could convince us that we must be like to God, in order to enjoy his presence; if he alone could shew us the Father; if he alone could experimentally satisfy us of the possibility of resisting our enemy the Devil, and shew us the successful weapon for the purpose; if he alone could assure us that, if we do not work out our salvation, we shall suffer eternal misery with beings hostile and implacable; and if these informations excite us to attempt the recovery of our purity—then the descent of Jesus alone was necessary to our salvation.

If, for the sake of the death of Jesus alone, sins committed by some men, before their entrance into the covenant of mercy, were pardoned; if in the blood of Jesus alone could be established that gracious covenant; if it became

Jesus, as our high priest, to offer up a sacrifice without spot and without blemish, which could be the sacrifice of himself alone; if he by his death alone could render the conditions of salvation unalterable, so that they who observe them will be saved, and they who neglect them will perish; if by his death alone we receive the holy spirit, to assist us in our work; if, by the manner of his death, he alone proved himself a perfectly righteous man, and thereby became a proper Mediator for us; if he alone, by his death, could perpetuate the divine abhorrence of sin; if his death alone was required by the Father; if he alone could bequeath to us eternal life; and if these circumstances urge men to persevere in their arduous and advantageous undertaking—then the death of Jesus alone was necessary to our salvation.

If all sinners must have continued in the chambers of death by the first covenant, and no being could destroy the power of him who was lord of death, and deliver us out of his hands, but he alone who could raise himself from the dead; and if these considerations prevail upon us to follow the steps of the Messiah—then the resurrection of him alone was necessary to our salvation.

If it was not in the power of any man to
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ascend up into heaven, but of him who came down from heaven ; if he alone had power given him to present all his followers before the celestial throne of grace and mercy ; if he alone can there plead successfully for a pardon of all their offences, and obtain for them a settlement in the regions of bliss, permanent to all eternity ; and if these considerations enable us to perfect holiness—then the ascension of the Messiah alone was necessary to our salvation.

We are of opinion, indeed, that no other being ought to be our Saviour, on account of the adoration that would be due to him : from whence we conclude, that Jehovah would not make choice of any other being for that purpose. But him he selected, as the adoration paid to him is paid to no other than a divine person, who in a mysterious manner was in the man Christ Jesus, reconciling the world to the Father. By which means all the thanksgiving, praise, and worship, due for our salvation, are confined to the Godhead alone ; to the Father, as proposing and accepting the atonement ; to the Son, as making it ; and to the Holy Ghost, as qualifying us for the benefit of it.

2. As the motives which derive their great influence from Christ alone, and could derive it from

from no other being so powerfully, if suffered to operate upon us as they ought, are strong enough to allure us to virtue, and terrify us from vice.—For, first, what can be more alluring than to be admitted into a covenant of mercy, and to receive the easy terms upon which we may obtain eternal felicity? What can be more alluring than an amiable pattern of universal righteousness, which steals upon us insensibly to admire and praise it, and to excite a wish that it was imitated by all men? What can be more alluring than to be put in possession of that wisdom, by which we may defeat the machinations of those who would obstruct us in our progress? What can be more alluring than the promise and bequest of immortal life and happiness? What greater incitement can we have than the promise of the assistance of a most powerful Being; or a certainty of our being raised from the dead; or, lastly, a well-grounded assurance of being carried up into heaven, and abiding there for ever and ever?—Secondly, what can tend more to terrify us from vice, than the information that God inflicted a very severe punishment on the human body of his most dear Son, on account of our sins; and the divine denunciation of those everlasting torments, of which even the distant thoughts strike

us with terror, and render us miserable before we feel them?

If the gospel scheme of salvation contain these most cogent motives to entice and impel men to work out their salvation; and will, upon their being duly influenced by the motives, most effectually secure it; why need it be asked, whether we could be saved by any other scheme? or why should objections be raised against this?

3. As the motives are dependent on one another in such a manner, that not any one of them could be dispensed with.

If the gentle allurements to virtue and piety would be of little or no force without the fear of eternal punishments; and if both these would avail but little without the assistance of the spirit; and if these three might be unsuccessful without a moral certainty of rising from the dead; and if all these would leave our hopes of eternal happiness precarious, without a full trust of being presented to God, to receive pardon and an heavenly reward:—and if, on the other hand, there be no pleasure for us in heaven without holiness, and no holiness to be obtained without the spirit; and if human nature be so depraved that it will not forsake its sinful pleasures, to receive the holy spirit, before a desire
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for him be first raised ; and if nothing be so apt to raise a desire of him as the amiableness, the delights, and the temporal and eternal rewards, we see and learn to be attendants on holiness, and the shame, the disappointments, and the miseries, of this world and the next, which await a vicious conversation—if these things, we say, be true, then the several circumstances of the Messiah's descent, death, resurrection, and ascension, were all necessary to our salvation, as pregnant with the most cogent and necessary motives to excite us to the performance of the conditions required on our part in the covenant of grace and mercy—were all so necessary, that not one of them could be dispensed with. The omission of any one of them would have left the work imperfect and incomplete. Why then should any part of the scheme be objected to ?

4. As it is a reasonable and equitable method of salvation.—If we consider the impotence of man, how unable to secure his salvation in opposition to enemies within and without—enemies within, flattering and delusive—enemies without, insidious and powerful, more powerful than himself—and that he himself must work it out, or lose it—we may admire the goodness and wisdom of our Creator, who hath formed an effectual scheme,

scheme, wherein he hath so divided the great work between us and our Mediator, that our **2** merit is that without which we cannot be saved, and is that which will be accepted for the sake of Jesus. His undertakings and proceedings move us to virtue; we set about it; and, by the assistance he is pleased to afford us, we clothe ourselves with such habits of righteousness, as in every respect fit us for the celestial habitations: and, for these our deservings, Jehovah sets open the gates wide before us, and is graciously pleased to bestow upon us a crown of righteousness.—Is not this a reasonable and equitable way of saving mankind?

Again—if, in this scheme, justice is fully satisfied, receiving all that she could demand—and if mercy interposeth, not to stop the hands of justice, but to offer every individual of the human species an opportunity of saving himself (that the Deity might not be accused of cruelty in making them eternally miserable, or depriving them of the felicity for which they were created, for the offence of one man); and offers practicable terms of salvation, and they perform those terms—then this scheme must be allowed by all to be a reasonable and equitable method of saving mankind. In other words, if the punishment denounced against sin be inflicted
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upon the finners, there is strict justice; if the true and real man be no more affected by it, than our bodies are by putting off an heavy and troublesome garment, here is an instance of provident mercy; if a new covenant of salvation be made, this is an instance of restorative mercy; and if man commenceth an ardent lover of God, and (using the most vigorous exertions to obey all his precepts) becomes a new creature in heart and practice, fulfilling the terms of the new covenant, there is equity in bestowing upon him that reward which hath been promised to such a new creature: which most perfect harmony between justice and mercy the Psalmist seems to have celebrated in language expressive of the tenderest endearment, taken from the meeting of two affectionate friends after a long separation, who in transports of joy embrace and salute each other—*Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

5. As it seems that no other scheme could be so well adapted to produce the end in a reasonable and equitable way. St. Paul, speaking of the redemption by Christ, tells us that *it became him, from whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* By the

the expression, *it became him*, we may understand either that it was most agreeable to the end (for in this sense is the word *become* used in the Epistle to Titus—*Speak thou the things which become sound doctrine*); or that it was so necessary that no other method could do, in which sense the word *became* is to be taken in the Epistle to the Hebrews—*Such an high priest became us who is holy*; which is as much as to say, that no other could answer the purpose *. We are indeed inclined to believe that the peculiar propriety of the scheme, and the absolute necessity of it, may be argued from its ordination by infinite goodness, wisdom, justice, and power.

If we have now shewn the gospel scheme of salvation to be best adapted for the purpose, and the only one that can secure it, as far as we can see, man should be extremely cautious of replying against it, lest he be found to reply against God; lest, instead of glorifying that gracious being, he be found to dishonour him. For since all things are for him, *i. e.* for his glory, and all things are ordered by him; the man who impeacheth this salvation of want of wisdom, good-

* We have observed above, in shewing the necessity of Christ's death, that the expression *it becometh* hath this last signification.

ness, power, or justice, or in any respect depreciates it, most impiously robs the Divine majesty of his glory. Let human reason then, and human wisdom, be silenced for the future, bending the knee in wonder and adoration before the throne of infinite wisdom—that infinite wisdom, which in this great work hath preserved the debt of worship to the Deity alone, offered no violence to the free will of man, nor given an undue compassion to God; who in this case hath acted only like a benevolent man, who, seeing his friend lost in a journey, kindly shews him the right road, and at his request lends him his hand, and conducts him (if willing, and complying with his guide) safe to the place whither he was travelling.

If God hath appointed the most efficacious means of obtaining mercy, and hath given us assurance by covenant that we shall receive it by using the specified means; he who looks for uncovenanted mercies, looks for what he hath no reason to expect to find: and he who thinks to receive salvation by any other than the instituted means, hath great reason to believe that he shall meet with disappointment, because he relies on means of his own imagination, in opposition to those fixed on by the Almighty; than which there cannot be thrown a greater
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contempt upon God, or a more costly sacrifice offered to his own vain conceit. Such men would do well to consider seriously what is said by an inspired writer—*If he that despised Moses's law died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, done despite to the spirit of grace, and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing?* which offences every baptized person is guilty of, who despiseth, or doth not embrace, the evangelical scheme of salvation.

Cease then, vain, conceited man, whoever thou art, that arraignest the ways of Providence, cease to persist in thy unreasonable and unparalleled boldness, when thou hearest that an host of angels, beings far thy superiors in wisdom and knowledge—when thou hearest that a host of these heavenly spirits, in raptures at the amazing and gracious proceedings of Jehovah in favour of man, did, upon the coming of the Messiah into the world for our salvation, lift up their voices and sing—*Glory to God in the highest, who hath sent peace on earth, and good will towards man!*

Let us now speak a few words to believers.—You see that mercy has been freely offered to all men. We need not tell you that this mercy

is tied to conditions. We will not overload your memory with the conditions; we will only desire you to recollect that one of the apostles hath summed them up in one word, declaring that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*—without such an holiness in thought, word, and deed, as he hath promised to accept. We say, one of the apostles hath summed them up in one word, viz. HOLINESS: for as, in the first covenant, holiness comprehended the observance of positive as well as moral duties (for, in the estimation of the Jewish philosopher Philo, *εὐσεβής, the holy man*, was he who discharged all the duties to the Divine Being, as the just person was he who fulfilled all duties to man*); so, under the second covenant, *σвятые* and *αγιοι, the holy*, were people who discharged the whole of what was required by God: hence all the faithful are by St. Chrysostom called *αγιοι, holy*†: and this learned father defines *σвятые, the holy*, to be such who afford no handle for censure‡. In Theophylact's opinion, *σвятые, the holy*, are they who omitted no part of their duty to God§, they who neglected none of those things which

* Vide Phil. de Abrah. Plutar. in Demetr.

† Vide Homil. I. in Epist. ad Rom. cap. i. ver. 7. tom. iii.

‡ Vide Chrys. in Ps. CXLV.

§ Vide Theoph. Com. in Epist. ad Tit. cap. i. ver. 8.

they ought to do *. Holiness then, under the second covenant, does not contain the moral duties only, but the positive also. In the first covenant we read but of one positive duty, which was, not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the second are the following: faith and repentance, baptism and the eucharist, which are so many additional motives and helps to a new life. Faith in the gospel salvation excites to good works: repentance, being a contrition, or a great grief and trouble, for having acted wrong, tends to make us cautious of repeating the wrong: by baptism we have a new birth unto righteousness: and by partaking of the eucharist we receive the holy spirit, by which we are sanctified; which was probably the ground of St. Paul's saying that we are sanctified by the blood of the covenant, meaning that we are sanctified or made perfectly holy by the spirit which is communicated to us upon receiving the body and blood of Christ (which is the blood of the covenant), in their substitutes of bread and wine.—This holiness is not only a condition of obtaining mercy, but you have seen it to be a necessary means, a means as necessary as nourishment is to life. Do not then be so

* Vide Com. in Epist. ad Hebr. cap. vii. ver. 26.

absurd as to think of reconciling the hopes of eternal life with a course of unrepented wickedness, or a life without amendment; for the rewards of righteousness will never be given to him who hath justly merited the wages of sin.

We need not exhort christians to repentance, faith, and baptism, which are acknowledged by them all to be necessary; but as some people, if we may judge from their practice, think that the duty of receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper may be dispensed with, without any danger to their salvation, we shall just mention our opinion, which is this:—If a wilful disobedience to a positive command of a dying Saviour will give us a title to salvation, we may be saved without receiving his last supper, but not else. If his flesh be the bread of life, and we can live an eternal life of joy without partaking of that bread of life, we may live eternally happy without partaking of the eucharist: but if the bread of life be necessary to the support of that life, we cannot live that life without partaking of that bread, which is the bread sacramental. In our judgment the partaking of the eucharist is as necessary to salvation, as the washing in the river Jordan was to the cure of Naaman's leprosy. Some men may think, as Naaman did, that the means recommended to use are contemptible, compared

compared with others. But as we have great reason to believe that Naaman would have been cured by no other waters, and we are informed that he was cured by the despised waters of Jordan, so shall we be sanctified finally by no other means than the spirit we receive upon partaking of the body and blood of Christ. For however unholy the blood of Christ may appear to some persons for the purpose, yet as God can give virtue to whatever means he shall see fit, and hath assured us by his apostle that we shall be sanctified by the blood of Christ, *i. e.* by partaking of it—and as he is the Being who is to be appeased, and has annexed the benefit of the atonement to the body and blood of Christ—we must either embrace the means, or lose the benefit. For our further encouragement to this duty we may observe, that as the children of Israel, in the land of Egypt, were by the sprinkling of the blood of the passover preserved from the destruction which pervaded the houses of the Egyptians—and upon other occasions were cleansed from their pollutions by partaking of sacrifices, all of which prefigured the efficiency of Christ's blood, who is said to be our passover and our sacrifice—so shall those only be preserved from destruction, from our grand enemy the Devil, who have received, and so are marked with, the blood of Christ.

And however trifling the offence of disobeying our Lord, in one positive command only, may be in the eyes of men, in respect of a life of righteousness; yet as the holiness required for salvation is not perfect without an impartial obedience to God's commands, and as he who wilfully disobeys in one article merits the punishment due to a breach of all, we cannot reasonably hope for heaven without partaking of the holy sacrament, which is enjoined to all, and cleanse from all sin. As Adam and all his posterity were sentenced to death, and do actually pass through the gates thereof, for the transgression of one positive command, we have just reason to dread the condemnation to eternal misery, if we neglect this instituted mean of final sanctification and salvation.

To conclude.—When Jesus hath done, and will do, so many things for us; when he hath descended from heaven, laid aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and hath given us the most pleasing and pressing invitations to imitate his purity; when he hath suffered so much for our sins, and endeavoured by so many ways to deter us from them for the future; when he will raise us from the dead, carry us up to heaven, and bestow upon us the rewards of an happy eternity—when he thus assists us, in so many various points, in
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the road to happiness, and requires us to perform one article only, viz. to put on holiness—we cannot say that he is a hard task-master. When he sends us an assistant, a powerful assistant, to give success to our endeavours, we cannot think him a hard task-master. When we receive pleasure from every step of improvement in what he commands us, we cannot complain that he is a hard task-master. When what he enjoins us to do will give us such a happiness in this world as will never be attended with repentance, we cannot say he is a hard task-master. When he recommends to our practice what will qualify us for, and secure to us, the enjoyment of celestial felicity, we cannot esteem him a hard task-master. No, my brethren, the task is pleasant and easy to a well-disposed mind. Let us convince one another that we are well disposed, by vigorously setting about it; and we shall thereby secure the happiness of this and the future life. For *godliness, and godliness alone, is profitable unto all things; having a promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

But if none of the motives we have mentioned, if neither our own interest or the honour of God, will prevail upon us to attempt the work of salvation, we may be said to be dead to all feelings, or most perversely and obstinately

stinately to choose destruction. Nothing can reclaim us: an angel from heaven, or a messenger from the gulph of misery, would not attract our attention. We either should not believe them (for what can induce us to give credit to a messenger from either place, if we will not believe Jesus, who came down from heaven with the strongest credentials—if we will not believe Jesus, who, we have reason to be assured, reports the state of the wicked, in the case of the rich man, as truly as one of those unhappy wretches could?)—we say, we should either not believe the messengers, or divert the mind from their intelligence in the gratification of the then predominant passion: and being thus unqualified for heaven, and fit only for the company of the condemned reprobates, we have great reason to fear that we shall have our portion with those miserable wretches.

F I N I S.

